GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:226
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2002
BAN ON THE USE OF INTOXICANTS
CHANDRESH PATEL KORDIA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether several studies made in India and other countries have revealed that use of wine, marijuana and other intoxicants cause several diseases including cancer, tuberculosis etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to enact a law to ban the use of these intoxicants; and

(d) if so, by when the ban would be imposed by the Government?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA)

(a)to(d): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 226 FOR 4.12.2002

(a)&b): No nation wide survey has been conducted regarding the use of wine, marijuana and other intoxicants. However, it is now fairly well established through several studies conducted in India and elsewhere that the use of several substances of abuse including alcoholic beverages, tobacco and tobacco products and opioid substances with a high risk of causing addiction and dependence causes physical, psychological, social and economic problems to the individual, family and society.

Alcohol use is often associated with development of liver, cardiac and neurological diseases and use of illicit substances including injectible drug use is associated with development of Hepatitis, H1V/A1DS, Tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases. Other diseases may afflict a person due to ill health or increased vulnerability caused by alcohol, marijuana and other intoxicants (Heroin, Opium and related substances) use/abuse.

(c) & (d): From legal perspective, the substances of abuse like alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs are dealt under separate Act/Regulations by Central and State Governments.

Control over alcohol(alcohol production and sales) is primarily a State subject. Various states have attempted prohibition at various times with varying results.

Regarding illicit substances (Opium, Heroin, Marijuana and psychotropic drugs), there is a specific Act namely, Narcotic Drugs and Psycholropic Substances Act 1985 (revised in 1989) administered by Department of Revenue, Government of India. This deals with the control and treatment and rehabilitation related issues. Production, cultivation, distribution and transport of narcotic substances are strictly regulated under the provisions of this Act and there are legal provisions for enforcement/ punishment.

As regards tobacco, a Comprehensive Bill to discourage the use of tobacco products including Gutka has been introduced in the Parliament.